



Tasmania

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DEPARTMENT of
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES,
WATER and ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT DIVISION

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12 February 2003

Mrs Poppy Lopatnuik
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
Bellerive TAS 7018

Dear Mrs Lopatnuik

**GROUNDWATER MONITORING AT THE FORMER REFUSE DISPOSAL SITE:
WENTWORTH PARK, CLARENCE STREET, HOWRAH**

I am writing regarding your query on whether or not groundwater monitoring would be undertaken at the former refuse disposal site at Wentworth Park, Howrah. You have expressed your concerns to the Environment Division regarding the potential groundwater contamination at Wentworth Park having a causative effect on various illnesses and cancers that have occurred over the last 30 years in the area.

As you are aware Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT) within the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources have undertaken a Statewide investigation of groundwater quality at current and former refuse disposal sites. This Division contacted MRT to enquire whether they were able to include the site at Wentworth Park in their investigation but they had completed their program and are not undertaking any further well installations or groundwater investigations.

I regret to inform you that the Environment Division will not, at this stage, be undertaking any groundwater monitoring in the area. If groundwater monitoring were to be conducted at the site, the analytical results would only indicate the current status of groundwater quality. To some extent the Statewide investigation undertaken by MRT will indicate likely groundwater quality from refuse disposal sites of a similar age, which may provide information for our further consideration.

Samples from groundwater monitoring will not assist in determining whether groundwater was contaminated at the time that you have advised us the diseases and cancers developed in the area. Even if we could extrapolate this information back 30 years to indicate whether or not groundwater was likely to be contaminated, information we have received from the Department of Health and Human Services indicates that the nature of the various diseases and cancers that have occurred in the area do not represent a cancer cluster or an abnormal pattern of illnesses.

GENERAL ENQUIRIES (Statewide): Telephone: 1300 368 550

Internet: <http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au>

I understand that this is not the outcome you were hoping for. However, we are not in a position to justify a new groundwater monitoring program to obtain information that we believe, ultimately, will not provide you with the answers that you are looking for.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. Jones', written over the closing 'Yours sincerely'.

Mr Warren Jones
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

CC: Andrew Ezzy, Mineral Resources Tasmania
CC: Ron Vanderwal, Clarence City Council, PO Box 96, Rosny Park Tas 7018
CC: Martin Bichevkis, DHHS